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ABSTRACT

This issue of "Loblolly Magazine," written and edited by Texas high school students, features two female principals in the Carthage, Texas, school system. Dura Heaton Lampin was the first principal of Libby Elementary School (built in 1955) and the first woman principal in the Carthage school system. Rosa Lee Edge was the second principal of Libby Elementary School. The journal's interviews with Dura Lampin were conducted by Nichole Burns and Amanda Porter, while the interviews with Rose Lee Edge were conducted by Mary Robinson and Kathy White. The interviews focused on the early careers of the two women, their education beyond high school, the grades they taught, their families, their later careers, and retirement. (BT)

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Libby School Leaders: Principals--Past to Present.

Cassie Downing, Editor
Fiona McGarity, Editor

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LOBLOLLY

Libby School Leaders

Principals-Past to Present

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Cover: Libby School Principals - Dura Lampin (the first one), Gloria Creel (present one), Rosa Lee Edge (the second one).

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Dura Heaton Lampin

Dura Heaton Lampin is a dynamic person now enjoying a well deserved retirement. However, she seems to be as busy as ever with a variety or interests as she has maintained an active role in her life and community.

Mrs. Lampin devoted 42 years to serving the children of Texas as an educator. The first 15 years were as a classroom teacher and the following 27 as the first woman principal in the Carthage Schools. She also served as the Vice-President of the Texas State Elementary and Supervisors Association. Mrs. Lampin was a 40 year active member of Delta Kappa Gamma, the teachers honorary association.

Dura Heaton Lampin has been a member of the First Baptist Church of Carthage for 58 years. She taught Sunday School there for 35 years, and also sang in the choir. She was the president of the Carthage Music Club for two years during her forty-five years of membership. This was a reflection of a lifetime love for music. Her love of gospel music is to be heard still as she continues to play the piano and organ for her own pleasure.

Dura Heaton Lampin has been an inspration for us as we interviewed her. We found that she still loves young people and will always be a teacher.

Q. Where were you born and when?

A. I was born in Gary, Texas, on March 29, 1911. I am 88 years old.

Q. Were you born at home?

Dura Heaton age 18

A. Certainly, people didn't have hospitals then. At least not close enough. Probably some in Shreveport, but none close to Gary.

Q. Did Dr.Daniel have a role?

A. He delivered all Mama's children in our home. There were eight of us.

Q. How many boys and how many girls?

A. Two boys and six girls. I was next to the youngest. There were five year's difference between me and the baby of the family. My oldest sister was nineteen when the last baby was born.

Q. Tell us about your family and background.

A. I am the daughter of John Clarence Heaton and Fannie Lou "Ludie" (Holleman) Heaton. My grandparents were John Asbury and Sarah Emma (Harrison) Heaton and John and Frances (Morris) Holleman. My father, called Clarence, died in 1919 at the age of forty. He and his brother, Walter, had owned and operated a long country store in Gary, Texas for many years before his death. Clarence had four brothers and four sisters in addition to five half-brothers and sisters. His mother died when he was very small. His father married again and he had a stepmother. She was the only grandmother that I ever knew. To me she was just my real grandmother, and I loved her. My father and his four brothers were real close.

Heatons General Merchandise was a store that housed everything a family needed. In this store we had everything from equipment that you would use on the farm to saddles, and from the grocery line. We got all of our groceries there except, of course, what we raised on the farm. Almost everybody was a farmer back in model cars before he died. There were not many cars on the road then. He thought there was no other way to

travel after he had learned to drive a car. He said he would never be without one. We had an almost new car when he died. He did love it, in fact, I remember one time, I know he thought it was funny. I couldn't have been over six. My mother, with a great number of children, had to limit our visits to town with daddy. To be in the store with daddy was a real prize. Of course, one of us did not get to go everyday. He came home for lunch. It was my turn to go, that was the greatest day of my life, to go with my daddy. As we started off, I was thinking. I had it planned; I'm a big girl and I have watched my daddy drive, and I can drive. I know I can drive. So I thought, I've got to work up to this thing because I've never asked him for anything that he wouldn't do or wouldn't grant. As we were going toward Gary, I said, "Papa, I want you to stop this car, get out, come over here where I'm sitting, and let me take your place, I can drive." You can imagine the laugh he got I can still see that little smile on his face. At first he didn't say much. I said, "Can't you do that?" He looked at me and smiled and said, "You're too little to drive." I said, "but Papa, I know how; I've watched you. I can do it." This was the T Model; you can imagine how hard that would have been. Oh, I remember it well. I was just so sure that I could drive that car, and he said, "You're too little now, but when you grow up your Papa will see that you get to drive. We'll get you a car." Oh, that hurt my feelings!

When we arrived at the store, he gave me a bag of candy, and tried to make up for it. He had all kinds of things in the store, candy, canned goods, apples, everything.

During my early childhood, I remember wanting to go to school so very much. I learned to read at an early age because that's what I wanted to do. My mother wanted me to be a school teacher. She started to motivate me when I was very young. By the time I was five, my six older siblings were bringing their books home from school each day. Books were just something wonderful for me to get hold of. I worried my Mama to death in the kitchen. I would say, "Mama, I know that is reading, but what does it say, tell me." I learned my first words in the kitchen, reading labels. Then the kids would come home with their books, and I would want a book as soon as they got in.

One day mama said, "Dura, I'm going to let you go to school today." I thought well, what has happened to mama? Boy, is she getting good!

Well, I had the best time. The Heatons were all coming dawn the same road from school. The principal of that school, Mrs. Maude Hull, rode a horse. I saw her go into our home way on down the road. She stayed a while, and then she said, "Dura, I'm going to put you up on this horse and take you home." She didn't tell me what was happening at home until I got there, but she did tell me that they had something to show me. When I got to the door there was mama in her bed with a

new baby She thought that was going to be just great for me. But that was the worst thing that could have ever happened to me. I'd been the baby for five years. Now I was going to be pushed in with the big ones. All that old petting and stuff from the store, it was going to be shifted down to the baby. I didn't like that a bit. Mama said, Honey, come back to the bed and see your new baby sister." I was a stubborn little thing. I said, "Momma I don't like her." It took me a year to learn to love that pretty thing. Doris was a little beauty. When I did learn to love her, she was about a year old.

My mother and daddy had been representatives for some project they were working on in the community. They had gone on a train to Austin. Hubert my oldest brother, and the baby, Doris, went with them. The rest of us stayed with one of my daddy's brothers. When they got back, I ran down that road as fast as I could, and I decided that I liked that baby. I decided I wanted to see her for the first time. I ran in there where mama had her sitting up in the middle of the bed. She had the prettiest curly hair. She just smiled. I jumped right up there with her. That is how long it took me to love that little thing. She became a great part of my life.

Q. Were you rich then?

A.No, we weren't rich, I'm sure we were just average people. We were not at all rich, as far as money was concerned. We were rich in having

each other, loving each other, and going to church together. We went to Mt. Bethel Baptist Church in Gary. Many of our relatives attended that church as well. My daddy taught us to sing. He sang and directed the singing at Mt. Bethel where we had an old time organ with one pedal. My oldest sister, Ruby, played the organ. The rest of us sang specials. My daddy taught me to sing alto long before he died. I know that because my sister, Emma, and I sang many duets together. She was a really good singer. Most of us sang a lot of those "Sacred Harp Songs." It was beautiful music without the use of a piano or an organ. I had one song, they called it "my song" and I still remember that thing, every note of it. My sister had hers too, and then we had one that we sang together and one that our whole family sang. We also sang together in public.

Q. Where did you move after your daddy died?

A. As a young widow, my mother did not have adequate skills to gain employment outside the home. She loved the Lord, her children and worked very hard in her home and garden. Mama never had gone to the field to work because daddy wouldn't let her. But we had. She always had enough to do without that. My mother started wondering how we were going to make a living because everything daddy had was gone. She didn't know how to provide for us. We really had a hard time.

We moved to Jacksonville, Texas when I was in the 5th grade. I became eleven in March. We went in February. Can you imagine the adjustments? I went from a two teacher school at Mt. Bethel to the big school where the Tomato Bowl is now in Jacksonville. It was about a four-story building. I remember it had three or four entrances, and I was on the third floor. There were five sections of 5th grade at that time, believe it or not. I had been used to sitting on a "recitation bench" at Mt. Bethel with some kids that couldn't read. That had concerned me so I asked my mother if I could bring them home with me to teach them to read.

Amanda Porter & Nichole Burns with Dura.

I felt sorry for one little girl. I said, "Mama, she can't read, I've got to help her . Let her come spend the night with me." Now I thought that I could teach her to read overnight. I guess that was the teacher coming out in me right then.

When we moved to Jacksonville, things were a lot different. The school was larger and offered many more classes including the three "R's", reading, writing, and arithmetic. I remember my writing teacher, Lucille McBride, who's teaching style was different and more difficult. Geography and history were new subjects to me and I didn't really like them. Arithmetic, reading, writing, and spelling were my favorites. In those, I made straight "A's". I had been drilled in that.

At the completion of the seventh grade, which was then elementary school, we had a graduation service where we received diplomas—now we could enter high school! Many schools ended high school at the tenth grade, but not Jacksonville. Their high school went through the eleventh grade.

By this time, I had become completely accustomed to my schedules and Jacksonville Schools and was very happy with the work I had been able to do. I had many friends and was already talking about college.

At the end of eighth grade, we came back to Gary for a visit with one of my uncles that summer. I guess he knew that we were having a hard time financially. My uncle had a friend who lived

on the farm next to his. His neighbor's wife had died a couple of years before, so he decided to "play cupid". He got them together, and mama didn't go back to Jacksonville. When it came time to decide about where to live, I knew that I did not want to leave the Jacksonville schools or my friends there.

Two of my sisters were married and lived in Jacksonville. They went with me to mama, and said, " let her live with us until she finishes high school." Reluctantly, she let me do it. I stayed with Weida on year and Ruby two years until I graduated from high school. Dr. Daniel and his family had moved to Jacksonville, so I rode home to Gary sometimes on the weekend with them.

I was in the first graduating class at Jacksonville High School that wore robes. There were seventy-five of us in the class. I had seen a brand new high school go up. We had gone across town to see the cornerstone laid. I surly wanted to go to school in that new building, and—I did. I was seventeen when I graduated in 1928.

The Jacksonville Baptist College was where I wanted to go. Mama wanted me to start college there also. I wanted to live in the dormitories. The girls in the dorm had a lot of fun. I didn't want to miss that.

My stepfather, Billy Mack Risinger, co-signed for the money I borrowed for college. I thought he was great to help his seventeen year old stepdaughter. I was so happy that I cried when I got that debt

paid. That was several years after I began teaching.

So I went just one year and one summer to Jacksonville College and lived in the dorm. I had a great time. I made lots of new friends there. The dorms were not co-ed in those days, but the dining room, library and other parts of the campus was co-ed. I had a good time and Jacksonville had a good college.

I knew that I had to get a job. I was going to turn 18 just in time to get a certificate to teach. I was 18 on March the 29th before I started teaching that fall. The old school is gone now; it was on the road for Gary to Old Tennessee. It was about a third of a mile from our house. So I stayed at home the first couple of years.

I started teaching, but honest to goodness, I'd never learned anything about teaching in college. A cousin, who had one year's experience, helped me. I asked her, " how do you teach school?" "Well, we have to work on that for you", she said. She taught me to teach Reading from flash cards. We had fun. I only had 14 students. That was a switch,wasn't it. I made sand tables, I made cards. I made everything I could think of.

I loved it; I knew I would. I loved the kids. Don't ever teach if you don't. I still would love to be over there right across the road teaching. (A Carthage elementary school is directly across the street from the Winkler House where Mrs. Lampin lives now.)

The next year the principal moved away from the school. I had become 19 that year. They asked me to be the principal after just completing my first year of teaching. Several boys in the school were bigger than me, they asked me to be the principal. My family was surprised. My stepfather made me a paddle and he put holes in it. There were two rules which required punishment. One was cursing, the other was fighting. That's quiet different from now.

On the path leading to the outdoor toilet, two of the big boys were in a terrible fight. They were cousins. I called them in and they were not going to take the paddling. I said, "You can either take a paddling or you can go home for three days." Wasn't I naive? Don't you know that they were thinking that little lady can't paddle us. So, they looked right at me and said, "We want a paddling." I knew I was not as big as them, but I went to my desk and got my paddle out and said,which one of you want to go first?" I gave them a pretty good one. I didn't have to worry with them anymore. They were good boys after that.

It wasn't hard being principal. It was hard working with all those big boys. "No more of this for me, I want to get in another school," I told my stepfather. He was always trying to help me when I needed it. I had heard that there was a vacancy out at McCoy nearwhat is now Lake Murvaul. So he said, "Let's go over there." Two of my cousins had taught there and my stepfather was well ac

quainted with one of the trustees. We came home with a signed contract that night.

I taught in that country school eight years. After the first four years as their primary teacher, I married Raymond Lampin on the 22nd of June 1933. He was a car dealer. At that time, I needed a few hours to complete my first two year college certificate. We moved to Marshall for a few weeks that summer while I finished this work at East Texas Baptist University.

The Gary School soon asked Raymond if he would drive a school bus. So, he bought a bus and drove it for about three years. He worked at his business during the hours between his bus runs. It was real nice because we left about the same time each morning and arrived home about the same time in the afternoon. We were fortunate enough to rent a house right by the school.

Dura and Raymond Lampin.

Raymond had a vision. One day he said, "I have been looking around, and the man that used to live here, Mr. Cub, told me that he would sell me this land. It's about 79 acres." I said, "Raymond, we just got married. We don't have the money to buy that land." He said, "Yes we do. We are starting now for old age. We are going to start investing our money in something that will help us later." I wasn't interested in old age. I was young and wanted pretty dresses and a pretty house. But, Raymond was so good to me. I just had to give in. He took our money and bought that 79 acres of land and continued through the years to buy more land. He said, "I know it's taking everything we have, but we're going to do it."

He did just what he said he would do. Thank goodness he planned for our future, because I surely did not. When Lake Muyrvaul was being built, we had to let them have about 350 acres of our land. Raymond divided the land around the lake into lots. He just went right in and started building roads through that land. Soon he had two businesses; a car dealership and a real estate business.

I continued to teach and go to college in the summers - receiving a BS from SFA in 1947 and a Masters degree from SFA in 1950. By this time we had moved to Carthage. I wanted to stay home for awhile. My husband said O.K., that I could stay home because that's where he wanted me to be.

Mr. Q.M. Martin was the Superintendent of the Carthage Schools at that time. One day he asked his secretary to call me. She said,"Dura, we need you today to substitute. The lady that teaches first grade has gone to meet her husband." (This was during World War II) I said, "I know nothing about teaching in a place like Carthage. I'm just a country teacher, but I'll help you out."

Well, one day Mr. Martin came to my classroom door. So, I ask him to come in. He came in and stayed two days observing my work. Two weeks from then, he knocked on my door again. He said, "Dura, can I come in and talk to you about a teaching job?" I said, "Well, yes you may." He was talking about a full time job." My reply was, "Well,I don't think I'd be interested. Then he said, "I'm getting ready to go to war which requires me to make a lot of changes in the school. I just wanted them to be done before I have to leave. I know that this isn't really what you wanted to do, but I wondered if you could do it for a year at least and then I'll try to get you back in the primary grades." I said, "Well, what grade did you want me to teach?" He said, "I want you to teach in a departmental situation in the 5th, 6th, and the 7th grades with my wife and another lady." He asked me what subject I would rather teach. I was still fond of math, but I was thinking about how hard it would be to teach in those grades, with that many students. I wasn't going to do it, but he kept insisting until I accepted. He said, "I know that next year

I'll need a new 1st grade teacher, and I promise you that you can have it." My first day I went up there and found out that in the 5th grade I had 49 students, and I had been teaching in the rural schools with about 14 to 18 students. In the 6th grade I had 56, in the 7th grade I had 59, I was teaching math in all of those and reading in two of them and health in another.

Dura Lampin and a class at Carthage.

True to his word, he let me teach in my favorite first grade the next year, actually the next four years. That makes a total of five years in Carthage at this point. Then he asked me to become principal of the primary school. Again, I said no. But he told me that I had already been elected. So, I accepted. After eight years as principal I had

learned to love it. In 1955 the new Libby Elementary School was finished. I became it's first principal. It was very modern. A lot of people were coming to look at it. One day Mr. Martin told me that someone wanted to come to see the school. So I said, "OK, everyone is welcome."

This man was beginning to gray, but he still had those big brown eyes. He walked in and immediately I said to myself, "You were my Jacksonville High School principal." That had been a long time ago. He extended his hand as I did and we shook hands. I said, "I know you but you won't remember me." He quickly said, "You wait just a minute; you are Dura Heaton." I don't know how many years it has been. Here I was going to get to show my high school principal my own school. So

I showed him around and of course we were reminiscing about those old days in Jacksonville.

Another time, they sent a group of us to a national convention in Atlantic City. We went on a Texas train. There were supervisors and principals, counselors, everybody. I was going with Mrs. Vallie Baker.

One day we were sitting on the train, and I looked down the aisle and said, "Mrs. Vallie, I see someone I know very well." She said, "Who is it?" I told her that he had been my superintendent in Jacksonville for several years. I went down to where he was sitting and said, "I came down here to say hello to you, but you probably don't know me." He grabbed my hand and said, "Well, let me think a minute. I do know you too; you are Dura Heaton." So I sat down and we talked a while. I have many good memories of my days at Libby Elementary. I was principal there for 19 years. You couldn't ask for a better group of people to work with. In 1974, I retired with a total of 42 years in the Texas School System.

Q. What is the key to being a principal?

A. There are so many keys. Love the children, that's my #1 thing, and keep working on your education. After I got my masters degree, I wasn't satisfied. I really didn't want to get a doctorate, but just wanted to learn more about being a principal. I learned so much by doing that and going to school.

During World War II, I thought my husband

might have to go to war. So I bought a typewriter and taught myself to type in case he had to leave. I felt I might need this some day. As it turned out, he didn't have to go to war, but I learned to type.

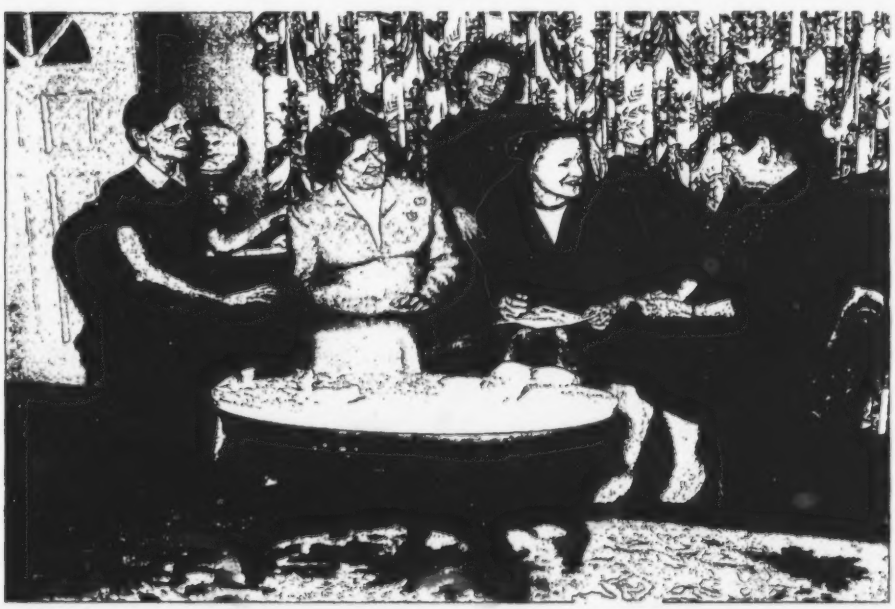
Later on, I took short hand, because it might come in handy. When I became principal, I needed it. I had arthritis in my hands, and I guess I didn't write very well, but I could type. After I was principal, when I wanted to send a letter out, which was nearly everyday, I used those skills. That's where it came in handy. Now, if I could see, I would still be typing.

Raymond Lampin

Q. What did you do after you retired?

A. We built a new home the last year before I retired. After retirement, I became more active in the community and at church. We lived in our new home 19 years before Raymond died which was five years ago. He was a wonderful husband. I have really missed him. After his death, I lived there four more years. We had great neighbors and a nice home. I felt safe there.

Then, I began having heart problems and serious vision impairment. I started thinking about



L-R Charlyce Lacy, Sallie Mae Ross, Sallie Moore, Dura Lampin, Julia Davis. Carthage Music Club. Committee mtg. at Dura's home. Dura, the committe chairman, about 1960.

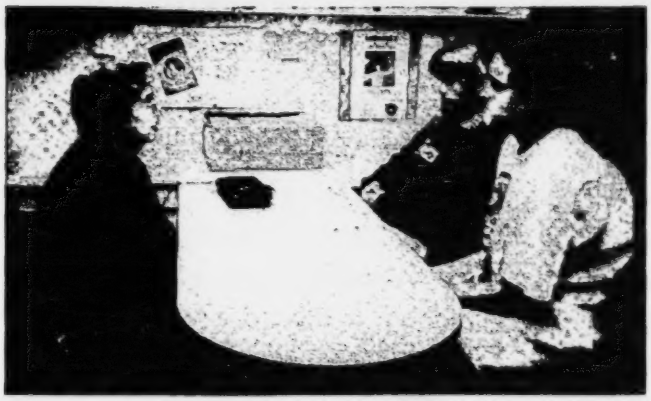
living at the Winkler House. I had friends living there. I knew that I wouldn't have to cook; that I would have a private place to live. I would have people all around me. I love people. But, it's hard to give up your home. I prayed about that. I pray about many things. I said,"Lord, I'm going to leave this up to you. I want to call the Winkler House in the morning to ask if they have one vacant room. If it's not your will for me to go, don't let them have one." I knew they usually had a waiting list.

I called the next day. She said, " Dura, I have one vacant room." Wouldn't you know it. I said, "Lord, thank you. That's your answer." I asked her when I could come for an interview and she said the next day. I took my dear friend, Frances Fite, and a niece with me. I signed up on Thursday and moved in on Saturday. I talked to my pastor and said,"Was that the Lord's answer?" He said, " In my opinion, I think it was the Lord's answer."

Now I have been here at Winkler House for two years, living in a nice comfortable apartment and using my own furniture. I have never regretted my decision because I truly believe it was the Lord's will.

ROSA LEE EDGE

WE DECIDED TO VISIT WITH MRS. ROSA LEE EDGE ABOUT HER LONG CAREER IN EDUCATION. SHE GENEROUSLY SHARED HER MEMORIES OF GROWING UP IN PANOLA COUNTY. TEACHING FOR HER BEGAN IN A ONE ROOM COUNTY SCHOOL, AND CONCLUDING WITH HER TENURE AS PRINCIPLE OF LIBBY SCHOOL IN CARTHAGE. SHE SUCCEEDED DURA LAMPIN AT LIBBY. MRS. EDGE ALSO TOLD OF HER BUSY ROLES AS WIFE AND MOTHER IN ADDITION TO THE DEMANDS OF A CAREER IN EDUCATION. SHE NOW KEEPS BUSY IN RETIREMENT WITH A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES INVOLVING FAMILY, CHURCH, AND CONTINUING THE LOVELY FLOWER GARDEN STARTED BY HER AND HER LATE HUSBAND, ELDON.



ROSA LEE EDGE, KATHY WHITE, AND MARY ROBINSON

I was born in Panola County, down in the south-

east corner, in what is now known as the Old Center area. I was born April 18, 1918. I am 80 years old. I was the oldest child born into the family. My home was a house that didn't have any glass windows at all in it. It had shutters, and a door, and boards that were nailed together to make shutters, and if you wanted the light in, you had to open the shutters or light a lamp. Of course there was no electricity back then, no indoor plumbing. We drew our water from a well outside the kitchen door. We grew most of what we ate on the farm. There were very few things we bought at town. A visit to town was very seldom, just when they ran out of staple things in the house that we didn't grow on the farm. Then we could go to town; 15 miles to Carthage, eight to Tenaha. We had to go in the buggy. That was our mode of transportation back in that time. The children rarely went to town, usually it was for shoes or something that one of the parents couldn't pick up, just by going to town and selecting it.

We canned most of the food that we ate. We picked berries, grew the vegetables that we had. So we were pretty well self-sufficient, except for coffee, flour, and a few items like that. I had two brothers, and two sisters that were later added to the family. We worked and went to the field. I went to the field as a regular hand.

My sister, who was just younger than I, had a problem with her allergies that she would have if she ate certain foods or handled certain things outside. So she primarily stayed in the house, and my mother and I went to the field and made a regular hand, whether it was chopping cotton, thinning corn, hoeing cane, or pulling vegetables and preparing them to go to town to be sold.

I went to school in the beginning to a two teacher school at Old Center. Back in that day and time, the teachers did not have degrees. My teacher was about 18. She had not even finished High School, but she was qualified. She had to go take a test in order to be able to teach, and she had started teaching. She was a very excellent teacher. As it so happened, she went on to work toward her degree, and she received her Bachelor's degree. In the mean time, I grew up and got my Bachelor's degree. After I had married and had three sons, and 13 years later I went back to teaching. When I went back to teach, I decided I needed my Master's degree. So I taught and went to school at the same time by going at night, traveling back and forth to Nacogdoches. When I was ready to get my Master's degree, who was in that line up, but my first grade teacher. (Eda Vaughn) She had gone ahead to pursue her career. She never

married. She lived to be 90, and I visited her, just before she passed away over in Shreveport with cancer. She was a very fine lady and a good teacher. I attended that school.

When I was ready to go into fourth grade, I went to Woods to school (Woods and Old Center both border Shelby County, their school districts do). It had a four teacher school and my parents thought that maybe I would have better opportunity to have more time with my teacher since that was a little larger school. So when I was ready to go into the seventh grade, I went back to Old Center, and I was the only student in the seventh grade. Back then, you did not have a way to run off tests for students, like you do now, so they wrote it on the black board (chalk board). She would just write my test on a piece of paper, and hand it to me because I was the only one. I did not realize that I was not able to see. I had a vision problem that I was not aware of. I just thought that I was really kinda stupid. I would be sitting on the front porch and someone would walk down the road in front of our house and the whole family would seem to know who it was and what color they were. I could not see any of that. But I still didn't realize it until the next year when I went into the eighth grade.

My parents, because they didn't have an

opportunity to even finish high school had the desire for their children (all of us) to get an education. So they wanted me to go to a high school where I could have accreditation when I was ready to go into college. So I lived with my grandparents for two years in Tenaha, and went to Tenaha High School. You could imagine from one student in my class to a room full, that is what actually happened when I went to Tenaha. They had a whole room full of pupils. Well my name was Hancock (my maiden name). We were seated alphabetically with all of that group of pupils and Hancock invariably was seated at the back of the room. When I got my first report card, I had some C's. My daddy was really torn up. He began to say he knew I had not received the educational needed out in the Rural School which was not true. I had gotten a pretty good education there. I was torn up and cried, and said, "I could not see the board." Well, needless to say, on the Friday, I got my report card, the next day I was shuffled off to see the optometrist in Center. After I got my glasses, I was in a new world. Then you didn't go back to get your glasses, they were just mailed to you. They were supposed to fit. I got them at the post office and took them out of the box. I put them on and the big city of Tenaha, I was in a new world! I could call out things that

I was seeing, that I had never seen before. I was so near sighted 'till this whole new world opened up to me.

I have always liked to read, and the first library book I ever had in my hand was when I was in the seventh grade at Tenaha School. I had never seen a library book at all. I had read little farm magazines that my parents took, and that was my source back then. When I was in the seventh grade, my teacher who had been to college and knew about a book program that the State of Texas was offering for students who didn't have a library. She ordered those books from Austin and I'm sure she paid the postage for them coming to her, and mailing them back to the library in Austin. I had the opportunity to read 15 books! Not only did she do that, but there was another course that they were offering. These books were paperback, thinner books. I read 30 of those. So, I really had a ball, but I really didn't have a choice of what I read, because she just ordered them.

When I got to the eighth grade, the school had a library in Tenaha. At the Tenaha Library the front part had a little fence like a division, between that and the study hall. The back part was the study hall and the front was the library. That was my first time that I could actually go and choose a book that I wanted to read. So, I

really enjoyed that. I lived with my grandparents. They would take me to school on Monday morning and when school was out that afternoon, I would go to my grandparent's house, and I lived with them during the week. On the weekend my parents came and got me. The next year there was a man in the Woods Community who let his son take their family car and drive it to Tenaha. So there were four of us girls who our parents paid him to let us ride from Woods to Tenaha. I rode horseback from home up to Woods to catch that car. My brother and I rode horseback together. He would take the horse when we would arrive and he would stable it until his school was out in Woods that afternoon. He would have it saddled and ready to go, then we would go home. That was my junior year. Then, of all things, a bus was put on, my senior year at school. Only high school students were transported at that time. Others had to stay out, because we just had that one bus. So we picked up not only Old Center students, but the Rural Flats students, the Woods students. We even went to Antioch and picked up the students there that were in high school and transported them to school. But when I finished seventh grade, I'll go back to say, because we were a rural area we had to take a test. It was given by the state, to see whether we passed a certain

milestone we need before we entered high school. So my career in school was quite different from yours.

When I finished high school my parents made it possible for me to go to Nacogdoches. Of course, I was able to go to college and then you could teach without a degree. By the time I had two years of college I secured the Rural Flats School job. Most people in Panola County didn't even know there ever was a community or school by that name (Rural Flats). It was only a one teacher school, but I walked two and a half miles from my parents house to Rural Flats in the morning and I walked back in the evening, unless it was raining. My dad then would have someone in the family, or someone on the place to saddle the horse and get it ready, and I rode horseback to teach, and then I would tie the horse up for the day and then I started home. All of the time that I was doing that, I was doing what they called a Correspondence Course. The rest of the courses were in Carthage. The teachers would come from SFA and teach courses at Carthage. I had to go there to take the courses. In about four years from the time I finished high school I had taught two years of school, because my school term was seven and a half months. My salary was a total of $88 a month. I was very fortunate. I felt like at that

time $88 didn't go very far, but it went a lot farther than what most rural people had. In four years I taught two years of school and had my degree.

ROSA AND ELDON EDGE

I had not wanted to go to college when I got out of high school. My mother was a little smarter than I gave her credit for being. I wanted to go take a business course when I finished high school and get to making a little money a lot quicker. She challenged me. She said, "Go get your degree. When you finish your degree, and you still want a business course, I'll see that you can go do that." Well, by the time I got that degree. I had taught two years. I had a fellow who was showing quite a bit of interest in me (my husband). So I decided not to take my school back for a year, so we could get married at Christmas. Actually it turned out to be December 23, 1937. We had three sons. We had 58 years of happiness together and I stayed at home with the boys until they were old enough to go to school. Then I

went back to teaching and I taught at Leverett's Chapel in 1952-1953. That year my husband got a transfer, back to the Carthage area.

I came and applied for a job. Mr. Martin, had been the Superintendent when I finished high school. I wrote to him and told him that I would like to come and apply in person. I explained who I was. I sent the letter there, before I called him I asked him if I could come and if he could give me a time, so I wouldn't have to get out of school without a reason. I had to be very sick to miss a day of going to school. I didn't take off for just anything. I told him that I would love to come and see him on Saturday. I waited until after the letter had arrived. I called him and said, "I don't know if you remember me?"

"Oh yes , Rosa, I remember you!", he said. Then he began to tell me somethings about my dad and mother, of how they had been part of the team, that had settled a bus situation. He had asked them to be on this committee with him, and my dad was one of the first signers, who signed to get Panola College in Panola County. He remembered me from the first time I went to Shreveport for a Shakespearian Play that was being put on. He had driven the car, and taken a group of us over there. So he did remember me.

I graduated in May of 1935 from Carthage. That was the first year that I went to Carthage. Then, of course, I had both of my degrees from SFA. I wanted fourth grade and that was really my choice, that's where I had done my student teaching. I told Mr. Martin that's what I wanted. But he said he only had a fifth grade class opening. So I consented to take the fifth grade class. Just before school started, after I had moved to Carthage, I saw him, and he said, "Well, one of the new fourth grade teachers, one of the ones who had taken fourth grade decided instead of staying and teaching fourth grade, she would like to teach fifth grade. So she went to fifth grade and left the fourth grade open and I was the one who got that and is Helen Milam, Helen Hooker she had been, she was really a lot of help. You go into a new school, and I had never taught at a school as big as Carthage with that many students, so she was a lot of help in helping me reach the best. She taught fourth grade as well and just down the hall from me. She is still a very dear friend. I taught in what was the Koonce building and that's where I attended. The Koonce building was where I graduated from high school. From that stage is where I received my high school diploma and of course that is about to be torn down now, because they are going to be building there. But

that's how old that building is too. Of course, I don't know how old it was at that time when I graduated .

I taught fourth grade for twenty-one years. I taught self contained classes at first when I came to teach at Carthage. Later it was departmentalized. I taught social studies for a period of time, then I taught math. When we divided the math there were six fourth grade teachers. Then it was divided up. Principal Frances Fite came to me and said, "None of the teachers wanted that bottom group." It was divided according to the level that they showed their ability. She asked me if I would take them. I said, "Under one condition, and that is, I know that I'm teaching, but the Superintendent and the school board know what group I have, because when the tests are given, my students will not be able to have the kind of score that the other classes will. I'll do the best I can with them and work with them." Of course they needed more help and it took them longer to learn the things that the others learned. So I did that.

Then, when Mrs. Lampin retired, I applied along with eleven others. To tell you quite frankly, I was really surprised when I received the job (principal of Libby). Mrs. Lampin had been there since the building had been built. She had retired and they were looking for someone

ROSA LEE EDGE AS PRINCIPAL OF LIBBY SCHOOL

to come in. So, I went in as principal in the fall of 1974 and I was there for five years. Well, in the meantime, my husband, who was working for an oil company, they had just put quite a load on him. He couldn't get around to do what a lot of them wanted him to do without putting in overtime. So finally, he just came home one day and said he was retiring the first day of January. I said, " Do you want me to write you a letter notifying that you want to retire?" He said, " No, I took care of that today." I asked him what he did, because I knew he was out on a job. He said, " I asked the boss when he came around, if he had a tablet or something I could write on?" On a little yellow sheet of paper, he just wrote, "I will retire on the first day of January," and handed it to him. Well, that was his resignation. So, he said," Now you do what you want to do, because I have already done what I want

to do. I am going to retire, but you can stay with it or you can retire any time you are ready." So I stayed with it another year and a half before I retired.

Times have changed quite drastically since my beginning. When I started to teach school I had, when I walked in: a box of chalk, a black board, an eraser, a bucket, and a dipper. We didn't have running water or indoor toilets. I had little boys, see fifth grade was as high as this one teacher school went. They would go to the neighbor's house, which was about one fourth of a mile, just to get a bucket of water for the school. We all drank out of the same dipper. We all carried our lunches. It was during the Depression, and that was one of the most depressing things that I had ever seen. I had some students that only brought a biscuit and an onion for their lunch. I wanted to help the little fellows out so bad, but I couldn't afford to buy food for all of them. I had thirteen students. It was really heartbreaking to see them come to school with an onion and a biscuit for lunch.

Times were hard and some people had absolutely no money, or practically no money. We were still in the Depression and we, at my home didn't suffer as much, because my dad had a farm. We didn't lack for food, because we grew practically everything. We would grow

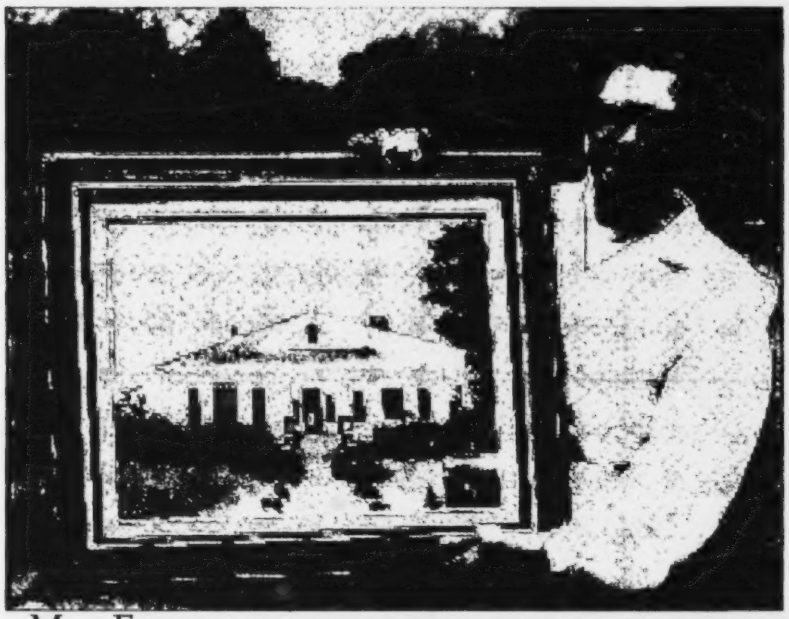
enough cotton to sell, to buy the essential things back during the Depression. But a lot of the people were not as fortunate. We made some of our clothes out of feed sacks. My mother really hated it when I went to college, but I had dresses made out of feed sacks. She dyed the sacks with dye that you would buy in town. She starched them, ironed them, then cut them out. What was so odd, that when I was in college, one of my teachers didn't see to well. I had a rose-colored dress that was made out of those sacks, and every time I wore that dress, she would brag on that beautiful linen dress. That thrilled my mother to think that she had done a good enough job on it that she thought it was a linen dress.

We did our own laundry then and we didn't have washing machines, where we rented. In fact SFA didn't have a dormitory for girls. So we stayed in the place that we called a "Light Housekeeping House." Inthis house we slept upstairs, two to a room, and downstairs, we had kitchenettes, divided off with tiny two-burner stoves, a little tiny table, two stools at a little cabinet. It was divided into 16 parts. We did our own cooking in the place where we washed our clothes. We had a closed area, and she had a gas pipe out there, and during any weather, we could go out and wash our clothes

on the rub board. She had a fire under the pot from gas, where we could boil our clothes. Back then we had to boil our sheets and that type thing to make them clean, just to be sure you killed all of the germs. We just had to dry them out on the line because we had no dryer back then. We had a place where we could iron our clothes. I didn't always cook there. I waited tables, (one of the years) for my meals, and washed dishes after the boarders had all eaten. One of the years (this was to help pay my board), I checked the girls in and out at night. That meant I didn't get to do any dating because I had to have them sign in when they left out. At ten o'clock they'd better be in, that was their bedtime. That was bedtime at our house too. I knew better than not to be in when bedtime came. Things have changed quite a bit.

I didn't have a car. My later husband, when I was teaching at Rural Flats, he was working in Groveton, just out of Longview. He was working 12 hours a day, seven days a week. So he said, "Rosa Lee, you can keep my car around here instead of walking to school, and drive." I said, "You have to be kidding, you know that I could not possibly afford to do that." And he knew why. I would have been a kept woman, so to speak, if I had kept his car down there and used it, with him not even down there. That

would have been the way I would have been referred to back then. Times were quite different about what a young lady could and couldn't do and still be considered as respectable. I went to school at Woods, that was three miles. I walked all the way there. It was a mile to Old Center.



MRS. EDGE HOLDING A PICTURE OF HER CHILDHOOD HOME.

The house I grew up in, after, well I guess I was about four years old when my father built the house, it is still standing, but it doesn't look anything like the house I grew up in. I have a picture of that house in my livingroom, and I am very proud of it, because that's the way my

house looked when I was growing up. We sold it when my dad was sick, my dad lacked one month and one day of being 98. He died in 1987, my mother died in 1970. We went to church in Woods, Woods Church is where I was converted. My parents are buried at Old Center and that is where my husband is buried at too. Most people don't even know Rural Flats existed, because it is grown up with trees and the building is not even there. I can go and put my foot right where the building was, even though the trees are there.

I have many fond memories of my life. I learned to drive. My dad had a truck, he didn't have a car and just before my husband and I were going to get married, he said, "You better learn to drive and get your drivers license." So I said, "Okay, I could keep a car on the road and go down the road." So my dad went with me to the courthouse which then stood in the middle of the Carthage Square. He drove and parked the truck in the parking lot. We went in together. My dad had held his age well. The man wanted to know what I wanted. I told him I wanted to take the drivers test. So I took the written part, when I finished the written part, he said, "Now where is your car, Mrs. Hancock?" He thought that I was my dad's wife. Of course it pleased my dad to think he

was young enough to look like he was my husband. So I told him it was outside the courthouse. He said, "Go get in the truck and back it out, drive around the courthouse, and park it." Well I did. He stood on the step and watched me back out, watched me take off, and watched me park it. That was my drivers test.

Really I was afraid to wait to get to Longview to take the test there. I was afraid I wouldn't be able to pass it there. So after we married I went to Longview. Of course we had a car. My sister-in-law lived next door. She didn't have a drivers license but I did. So what we would do before we would tackle going into Longview was to practice our driving. We had a little back road there, close to where we lived, and one morning we would go down and practice driving. There was a driveway there and we would practice driving and turning around and coming back, turn in another place and back out, and she would take the wheel and she would do it. We did that every morning for about a month, until we thought we were ready. She couldn't afford to drive becauseshe didn't have a drivers license. So when we went to pay bills, she took her four little boys. She'd take two and I'd take two, and we would go to town and pay the bill, buy groceries, and then she got her drivers license too. That was my experi-

encing how I got my drivers license.

The first time I rode on, what is now Highway 59, I remember sitting with my feet out of the back of the wagon as we were coming to Carthage. We were coming up from Woods and up this way. We wound in and out of in between the trees and there was no highway. Then I remember when the road was graded and the year that I rode with the boy to Tenaha. By then they had it graded well enough that they had gravel on it and it was a graveled highway from Tenaha to Carthage. Then I remember when they first put hard surface on it and now it is a two-lane highway.

I also remember the first electric lights. We were a little more fortunate then some. Before electricity came in, my dad bought a Delco and it had 16 batteries and you had to run that Delco periodically. We knew how to tell when the batteries were getting weak, then we would run this Delco to charge those 16 batteries and that's what gave us our electric lights, and believe it or not, we had an electric iron. There were three families in the Woods area that had Delco lights like we had. It was a motor that you cranked up and charged that batteries. Also the first radio that I ever saw was one that my dad bought on the 19th of December, and my baby sister was born on the 20th of December, and I was

going to school at Tenaha. The Superintendent was my arithmetic teacher. He told me to tell my dad, "When he gets tired of the radio, he can just turn it off, but don't try it with your baby, because it won't work." I was 15 when she was born. After I married, my parents had the electricity that want through the county and then they did away with their Delco. Then they were able to put in running water and a bathroom.

My dad had the first chicken houses in Panola County. They would only handle 500 chickens at a time. I didn't pay board at my house, because I was a member of the family, but I milked the cows before I went to teach every day. When I got home, that was my job. I did that before I went to school, I brought in fire wood. I gave them the money to buy the first brooder. It would only hold 250 chickens under the canopy of that brooder. They did well off of that. He made some of the best money with the early houses that he had because the people would come out. There was a black man that came from Houston. My dad had known him since he was a child. He had a little business in Houston and he would come up from Houston and buy what he could carry back with him. Then they would come out of Shreveport and pick up the fryers. After he did well with a

small amount, then he went and built a house that would hold 500. Eventually he had ten of those houses that would hold 500.

Then, when feed companies came, they controlled the price and everything. It got to where my dad couldn't order his own feed by the boxcar, unload it himself, and bring it out. He would go and get them to come out and bring a pump that would pump it into the house. Then it got to where he was so controlled, until it just broke down his will power. He had been so self-sufficient and making his own decisions and all. He gave up the idea of raising chickens. The men from Center would call on Sundays and say, "I have a car load of people who would like to come up and look at your chickens." So daddy had his first chicken houses back when I taught from 1936-1938. So that was actually the first of the chicken houses. He was recognized, I was really proud. When Tenaha had their Centennial Meeting, they honored him, and I have the plaques in my house that they gave to him. They delivered them the next day by mail, because he was just not able to go for that. But when they had their Centennial Meeting in Tenaha, he was one of the ones they honored that time, because he was the first one to raise chickens in Shelby and Panola County, that anyone knew of down there.

there.

In the meantime, of course, I had three boys, that needed to attend school and go to college. One went two years at Panola, then went into the Marines for three years and came back. Then he went to SFA and got his degree. The second one, went to Panola, and then the University of Houston. But he didn't complete his degree. I wish he had, but he's happy. He works for Swepco, now. The one that finished, got his degree, the older one , now lives in Tulsa and he has two sons. He is not working at this time. The company he worked for had a 200 man layoff, and he was laid-off. They retired him, in other words. So he really just kind of keeps house, does a little cooking, and mows the yard. His wife still works, but they live in Tulsa. The Swepco son, he lives out in Lake Murvaul. If you have trouble with your lights, he very likely will be one of the ones who will be looking for your problem.

The youngest one got his degree too. He taught at Henderson first, then he and his wife and daughter went to Brazil for four years, and taught in the American School in Brazil. He had worked for the Texas State Teachers Association for about four to five years, until they decided they wanted him to be away from home, and be at Fort Worth two nights a week. He said,

"No way, my little girl isn't going to grow up without me being at home." So he went into house repair, repairing people's homes in Austin, before he went to South America. When they came back, they went to Winston Salem, North Carolina. Because their daughter was interested in ballet, she entered the school there. The second year she was there, the New York City Ballet came and picked her up , and gave her a scholarship to go to high school in New York at the age of 16. She lived with a girl from Switzerland. They lived in the home of one of the teachers there at the school, who lived just a couple of blocks away from where they had to go to work and to school and all of that. She now is one of the dancers with the New York City Ballet.

In Western Salem, our youngest son had also been in the testing program in the school in Western Salem for four years. He was putting in so many hours, until he finally gave it up, and went back as an Assistant Principle, in charge of a science program they were having there. But last year the adjoining county called him and asked him to come over and place his application for the testing program for their county. The schools there are by counties, I mean the schools are scattered out over the county but they are under one main umbrella.

So he is in administration doing the program.

I have six grandchildren, and three great grandchildren, that I love very much. I don't get to see them as often as I would like to, but I do at times. I retired 1979 from Libby School as principal for five years there. Since then I've been at home and I've done some traveling. My husband, I lost him in January. We had a very happy home for fifty years.

There was an incident during my early college days which remains very vivid in my memory even though that was more than 60 years ago. In the spring of 1936, the Dean of Women of Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College who was Miss Ruth Mays, called all female students to the auditorium to give information about an important approaching event.

First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt, would be arriving in Nacogdoches on a given date that spring. All females would be expected to arrive at the local Country Club dressed in proper attire (hose, high-heel shoes, white gloves, purses, and hats). We were to form a line, greet, and shake hands with Mrs. Roosevelt as we introduced ourselves. This has remained an important event of my college days.

I do not remember any college students in those days having a car to drive while living on campus. We walked everywhere we went. I do not remember who picked us up at our room-

ing house for this memorable occasion, delivered us to the Country Club on the other side of Nacogdoches, and back to our residents. It certainly made a lasting impression on this young farm girl.

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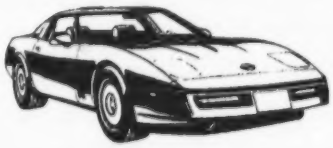

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